



File Code: 1950

Date: March 31, 2009

To All Interested Parties:

An errata to the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Montana Interoperable Communications Project - Ellis Peak Communication Site has been completed. The errata is posted on the web along with the complete EA and will be available for viewing and downloading at: <http://fs.usda.gov/bdnf/projects> by April 1. To request a paper copy of the errata please contact Leaf Magnuson at 406-683-3950, or send her an email at lmagnuson@fs.fed.us.

The project is located on the Dillon Ranger District, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (BDNF). The project area is located in the southwest part of the Tendoy Mountain Range.

The project would implement a Homeland Security directive to create interoperability for communication during emergency events. I, Bruce Ramsey, Forest Supervisor, am the Responsible Official. I recommend choosing the proposed action but am seeking input on the EA and will consider all public comments before making a decision.

When submitting comments, please provide specific facts along with supporting reasons that you believe should be considered by the Responsible Official in reaching a decision. Comments may be submitted in writing, orally, or through email. In order to retain your administrative appeal rights, you must provide written, oral, or electronic comments during this 15-day comment period. The legal notice will be published in the newspaper of record and the comment period will start on the day following publication of the legal notice and ends 15 days following the date of publication. Your comments must be postmarked by the end of the 15-day comment period. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on and will be available for public inspection.

The complete EA is available for viewing and downloading on the BDNF website at: <http://fs.usda.gov/bdnf/projects>. To request a paper copy of the EA contact Leaf Magnuson at 406-683-3950, or send an email to lmagnuson@fs.fed.us.

Send written comments to:

Tom Osen
Re: Ellis Peak Communication Site
Dillon Ranger District
420 Barrett St.
Dillon, MT 59725



Business hours for hand carried mail are 7:30 am to 4:30 pm

Written comments must be postmarked by the Postal Service, emailed, faxed, or otherwise submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the 15th calendar day following publication of the legal notice. Hand delivered comments must be time and date imprinted at the correct Responsible Official's office by the close of business on the 15th calendar day following publication of the legal notice.

Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone or in person, or if during non-business hours, must be at an official agency function (such as a public meeting), which is designed to elicit public comment.

Electronic comments may be submitted to comments-northern-beaverhead-deerlodge-dillon@fs.fed.us. The subject line must contain the name of the project for which you are submitting comments. Acceptable formats are MS Word, or RTF. For electronically mailed comments, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of the receipt of comments, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

Again, thank you for your participation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Bruce Ramsey*
BRUCE RAMSEY
Forest Supervisor

ERRATA
for the
2/2009 Environmental Analysis
Interoperable Montana Communications Project
Southwest Loop Antelope Peak, Sierra Peak, Ellis Peak, and Kona Ranch

The Environmental Analysis published in February did not include effects of the project on roadless areas and based the analysis on management areas and direction in the 1986 Beaverhead Forest Plan. This page provides updates to the following topics based on management areas and forest wide direction provided in the 2009 Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Plan, implemented March 23, 2009

Roadless Designation

The proposed Ellis Peak Communication Tower project is in the Medicine Lodge-Tendoy Management Area and lies in a backcountry summer recreation allocation and a winter non-motorized recreation allocation. Use of the existing primitive road to the site for construction and maintenance of a tower does not conflict with the summer recreation allocation or management area direction.

The EA also included analysis of Visual Quality Objectives under the 1986 Beaverhead Forest Plan which has been replaced as explained in the 2009 FEIS. The project complies with current forestwide scenic integrity objectives.

Regarding roadless concerns, Appendix C page 102 of the 2009 Revised Forest Plan FEIS states McKenzie Canyon is rated low for wilderness capability and low for wilderness suitability based on existing range improvements and low standard roads. It also states the area is not recommended for Wilderness under any alternative. Potential impacts for construction and operation of the communication tower on Ellis Peak would not reduce wilderness suitability because it is already rated low and there is no road construction involved in the project.

Region 1 Sensitive Plant Species

If it is determined necessary, the project site will be surveyed by a professional botanist prior to any ground disturbance. Based on the results of the survey, USFS will be consulted and a determination made as to whether any avoidance or mitigation measures relative to construction will need to be implemented.